

THE ANNOTATIONS OF ERASMUS
ON MATTHEW 3:2

A Paper

Presented to



Grace Research Room

by
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ABSTRACT

When John the Baptist and Jesus preached “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!” (Matthew 3:2, 4:17), what did they mean? How do we understand the word “Repent”? Unfortunately, there is a lot of confusion today about the meaning of repentance. Curtis Hudson writes: “The problem is not preaching repentance; it is giving a wrong definition to the word. Down through the centuries ‘repent’ has come to mean a far different thing than when it was spoken by John the Baptist, the Apostle Paul, the Apostle John, and Jesus Christ Himself.”¹

The Greek word for *repent* in Matthew 3:2 and 4:17—the first two occurrences of the word in the NT—is *metanoete*. The Roman Catholic Church has translated it: “Do penance”. But in the 16th century a Roman Catholic philosopher and scholar named Desiderius Erasmus (1466-1536) wrote against the Catholic interpretation of repentance as penance. Some of the things he wrote are very helpful in understanding the true meaning of repentance. He concluded that repentance is not “pious tears and obligatory duties” but is instead “a change of mind”. Erasmus was very influential in shaping Martin Luther’s understanding of repentance and paving the way for the Protestant Reformation. Indeed, one author goes so far as to say: “The Reformation could not have happened without Desiderius Erasmus”.² It is Erasmus’ *Annotations* on “repent” in Matthew 3:2 that is the focus of this paper.

¹ Curtis Hudson, *Repentance: What Does the Bible Teach?* (Murfreesboro: Sword of the Lord Publishers, 1986), p. 3.

² Katherine Little, “Before Martin Luther, there was Erasmus – a Dutch theologian who paved the way for the Protestant Reformation,” *The Conversation*, October 29, 2019, <https://theconversation.com/before-martin-luther-there-was-erasmus-a-dutch-theologian-who-paved-the-way-for-the-protestant-reformation-124861>

EDITOR'S PREFACE.

Some Protestants may be tempted to think that since Erasmus was a Roman Catholic, therefore his writings are irrelevant. But thank God that Martin Luther didn't feel this way! It was the writings of Erasmus as understood by Luther which sparked the Protestant Reformation. And in particular it was what Erasmus wrote about the word "repent" in Matthew 3:2 and 4:17 that opened Luther's eyes to the truth of the Gospel.

Never before, to my knowledge, have these Annotations of Erasmus on Matthew 3:2 been translated into English. If an English translation was ever made, it does not appear to be widely available, and at the time of this writing I have yet to find it. I was able to locate a few translated fragments, but even in these few cases, I did my own translation from the Latin and only used the other English translations to check my own work. In these few instances where other English translations are available, this information is cited in the footnotes.

I painstakingly checked and rechecked my translation using several critical Latin-English dictionaries, as well as using other language tools that are available online. It took several hundred hours of intense research and analysis to work through this translation and reconstruct the sentences into English. I thank the Lord that He gave me the opportunity and ability to do this important work.

May God be pleased to use this translation to open the eyes of those who sit in darkness, and may they come to see, as Luther did, the truth of the Gospel and of God's amazing grace! — J. PERREAULT.

THE ANNOTATIONS OF ERASMUS ON MATTHEW 3:2.

Metanoieite [in Greek]. Which is usually translated [in the Latin Vulgate], *Do penance*. I imagine that *Poenitete* [*Repent*], or *Poenitemini* [*Be repentant*], seemed insufficient Latin [to Jerome the translator of the Latin Vulgate]: although it changes elsewhere. But our common people consider *do penance* to be a prescribed punishment which somehow atones for faults that have been committed, because concerning Christians, those who had sinned publicly, having been cast out of the fellowship, they were openly afflicted. And that satisfaction, or punishment, began to be called *penance*. Indeed, with reference to these circumstances, [there was] a not small error by some theologians, because of something Augustine said about repentance, that is, public satisfaction, he wrote [in *City of God*, book 21, chapter 9], spiritual pain, which they call *contrition*, they distort [this]. In any case *metanoia* is derived from *metanoein*, that is, from perceiving afterwards: when someone having made a mistake, finally after the fact, recognizes his error. Which according to a proverb of Homer, *The wisdom of fools*. Also look at another proverb [*Hippolytus*, 436], *Second thoughts are better*. And hence we read, *I repent having made man*, Augustine, *City of God*, book 15, chapter 24, instead of *repented* read *reflected upon* [or *thought over*], according to the reliable oldest codex. It is similarly called *metameleia* [in Greek]: when we are heedless in taking action, we become aware too late, now admonished by our own suffering. Of the Greek word [for repentance] Tertullian elegantly commented in *Against Marcion* book II: *Now in Greek*, he says, *the word for repentance (metanoia) is formed, not from the confession of a sin, but from a change of mind*. In my judgment it [*Metanoieite*] can be properly translated *Recover your senses*, or *Return to a right*

mind. For indeed he comes to his senses, whose former life is displeasing to him. But [the Latin Vulgate says] *to do penance*, instead of *to be led to repentance*, I refuse to pronounce a barbarous solecism, and not remember to read the writings of good authors. *Act of repentance*, instead of *touched by repentance*, [occurs only] once in Suetonius. And Pliny [the Younger] in his Letters [7.10], *repent of its former repentance*, is found, not to mention an additional case from his uncle [Pliny the Elder]. Thus to say, *to do penance*, instead of *to repent*: [is similar to] how we say, *to conduct your life a certain way*, instead of [simply] *to live*. Valerius Maximus put it perfectly in the chapter *Wise Words and Deeds: [Socrates] responded, whichever choice you make, you will repent*, and from these statements which immediately precede, it is easily seen, what repentance is. Just as when we say, I have married the woman, but repent. Fabius [Quintilian, *Institutes of Oratory*], book 9 [chapter 3.12], indicates that Sallust wrote, *not intending to repent*, for *not intending to do penance*. Moreover, I am not very favorable to periphrasis [such as], *Repent of your former life*, or *Repent of your failings*. And yet erring men both pious and erudite, prefer rather to twist [things], indeed they falsely accuse, as these are now the customs and times [in which we live], [they command] penance by which the Gospel has been ruined. Although it was not this way at the very outset and thus [by this custom of doing penance] the wholesome satisfaction is destroyed, which accompanies a return to a right understanding, and puts an end to pious tears [and] ceremonial duties, & which [it is thought] somehow pay for the offense, but if the Greek word, [is] not derived from *punishment*, as it seems to some, [who translate it] *penance*, whereas more likely it would be derived from *comprehending afterwards*, and indeed by *coming to one's senses*, it is described as a *change of mind*. Therefore we translate both of the two [words], so that I may oblige everyone as much as possible.

THE ANNOTATIONS OF ERASMUS ON MATTHEW 3:2.

A LINE-BY-LINE TRANSLATION WITH NOTES

Poenitentiam agite. *Metanoete*. Quod plerumque vertit, *Poenitentiam agite*. Opinor quod *Poenitete*, sive *Poenitemini*, parum Latinum videretur: quanquam & sic vertit alicubi.

"Do Penance." *Metanoete* [in Greek]. Which is usually translated [in the Latin Vulgate], *Do penance*. I imagine that *Poenitete* [*Repent*], or *Poenitemini* [*Be repentant*], seemed insufficient Latin [to Jerome the translator of the Latin Vulgate]: although it changes elsewhere.

Notes: None

At nostrum vulgus putat esse *poenitentiam agere*, praescripta poena quapiam luere commissa,

But our common people consider *do penance* to be a prescribed punishment which somehow atones for faults that have been committed,

Notes: Rummel translates it: "Our people think that *poenitentiam agite* means to wash away one's sins with some prescribed penalty..." (Rummel, *Erasmus'*

Annotations, p. 152.)

quod apud Christianos, qui publice peccassent, ejecti e consortio, propalam affligerentur.

Eaque satisfactio, sive poena, poenitentia vocari coepta.

because concerning Christians, those who had sinned publicly, having been cast out of the fellowship, they were openly afflicted. And that satisfaction, or punishment, began to be called *penance*.

Notes: Wengert gives this translation: “because concerning Christians who sinned publicly, they were cast out of the fellowship and openly afflicted. And that satisfaction or punishment began to be called penance.” (Timothy J. Wengert, “The 95 Theses as a Template for Lasting Liturgical Reform,” *Institute of Liturgical Studies Occasional Papers* [Fall 11-2017], p. 6.)

Qua quidem ex re, non mediocris error Theologis quibusdam,

Indeed, with reference to these circumstances, [there was] a not small error by some theologians,

Notes: The phrase “a not small error” is attributed to Timothy J. Wengert. (See Wengert, “The Ninety-Five Theses as a Literary and Theological Event” *Lutherjahrbuch* 85 [2018], p. 46.) Literally in English the phrase would be “not a mediocre error”.

qui quod Augustinus de poenitentia, hoc est, publica satisfactione, scripsit,

because of something Augustine said about repentance, that is, public satisfaction, he wrote [in *City of God*, book 21, chapter 9],

Notes: None

ad animi dolorem, quam *contritionem* vocant, detorquent.

spiritual pain, which they call *contrition*, they distort [this].

Notes: Commenting on Mark 9:43-48; 2 Cor. 11:29; Isa. 51:8, Augustine wrote: “it is absurd to suppose that either body or soul will escape pain in the future punishment,—yet, for my own part, I find it easier to understand both as referring to the body than to suppose that neither does; and I think that Scripture is silent regarding the spiritual pain of the damned, because, though not expressed, it is necessarily understood that in a body thus tormented the soul also is tortured with a fruitless repentance.” (Augustine, *City of God*, book 21, chapter 9.)

Alioqui *metanoia* dicta est a *metanoein*, hoc est, a *posterius intelligendo*:

In any case *metanoia* is derived from *metanoein*, that is, from *perceiving afterwards*:

Notes: The Latin phrase *posterius intelligendo* means "perceiving afterwards". The Latin phrase can be variously translated into English as: “recognizing afterwards,” “understanding afterwards,” “realizing afterwards,” “discerning afterwards”.

ubi quis lapsus, re peracta, tum demum animadvertit erratum suum.

when someone having made a mistake, finally after the fact, recognizes his error.

Notes: Literally, “when someone having slipped (having lapsed, having fallen, having erred, having sinned), [and that] being done (accomplished, completed, finished), then finally he observes (notices, perceives, discerns, sees) his error.” This is similar to how we say in English that it is better “to learn from other

people's mistakes." The Latin verb *animadvertit* ("recognizes") means "to direct the mind or attention to a thing, to attend to, give heed to, to take heed, consider, regard, observe," also: "To mark, notice, observe, perceive, see, discern".

(Charlton T. Lewis, *An Elementary Latin Dictionary* [New York: American Book Company, 1890], p. 59.) Wengert translates it this way: "Indeed, from this fact there was a not small error by some theologians who twisted what Augustine wrote about penance (that is, public satisfaction) into a sorrow of the soul, which they call contrition. However, metanoia is derived from *metanoein*, that is, to come to one's senses afterwards when someone who sinned, finally after the fact, recognizes his error." (Timothy J. Wengert, "The Ninety-Five Theses as a Literary and Theological Event," *Lutherjahrbuch* 85, [2018], p. 46.) Rummel translates the fragment this way: "to come to one's senses afterwards...when someone who sinned, finally, after the fact, recognizes his error." (Erika Rummel, *Erasmus' Annotations on the New Testament* [University of Toronto Press, 1986, JSTOR], p. 152.)

Quae juxta proverbium Homericum, *Prudentia stultorum est.*

Which according to a proverb of Homer, *The wisdom of fools.*

Notes: Rummel writes: "Regarding *poenitentiam agere* (to do penance), the Vulgate translation of *metanoieite* (repent), Erasmus noted that the Greek word referred to a mental process, not a rite. He illustrated this by quoting Homer."

(Rummel, *Erasmus' Annotations*, p. 46.)

Eodem spectat alterum proverbium, δευτέρων φροντίδων αμεινόνων.

Also look at another proverb [*Hippolytus*, 436], *Second thoughts are better*.

Notes: Cf. Liddel and Scott's *Greek-English Lexicon* entry for the word φροντίς.

Under the meaning "thought, reflection, meditation" the lexicon says: "prov., αἱ δευτεραί πως φ. Σοφώτεραι Id. *Hipp.* 436." This can be literally translated:

"proverb, the second thoughts are wise (ones), *Hippolytus*, 436."

Unde quod nos legimus, poenitet me fecisse hominem, Augustinus de Civit. Dei libro decimo quinto cap. Vigesimo quarto pro poenituit legit recogitavit, juxta fidem vetusissimi codicis.

And hence we read, *I repent having made man*, Augustine, *City of God*, book 15, chapter 24, instead of *repented* read *reflected upon* [or *thought over*], according to the reliable oldest codex.

Notes: This is a reference to Genesis 6:6, quoted by Augustine in his book *City of God*. See the Roman Catholic Douay-Rheims translation of Genesis 6:6, which says: "It repented him that he had made man on the earth." The Douay-Rheims Bible is a translation based on the Latin Vulgate. Interestingly, for Genesis 6:6 the Latin Vulgate has *poenituit* ("repented"), while the older *Vetus Latina* has *recogitavit* ("thought over"). The *Vetus Latina* are the Old Latin manuscripts that predate the Latin Vulgate. For Genesis 6:6, the Old Latin (*Vetus Latina*) says: "*Et cogitavit Deus quia fecit hominem super terram, et recogitavit*" which can be translated: "And God considered the consequence of the fact that He made man on earth, and He thought [it] over." Cf. "Vulgata + *Vetus Latina*" (<http://vulgate.net/vt/gn6-6>). The Old Latin manuscripts are Latin translations of

the Greek Septuagint (LXX), which was produced in the mid 3rd century BC. For Genesis 6:6, the Brenton LXX translates it: “then God laid it to heart that he had made man upon the earth, and he pondered it deeply.” The Bible affirms that it is wise to give thought to one’s ways: “The wisdom of the prudent is to give thought to their ways, but the folly of fools is deception” (Proverbs 14:8, NIV).

Indidem dicta est *metameleia*:

It is similarly called *metameleia* [in Greek]:

Notes: Or, From the same place is the word *metameleia*. The Latin word *Indidem* means “From the same place, stock, origin”. The comparison that Erasmus is making is somewhat unclear. He seems to be comparing *metameleia* to the other Greek word *metanoeo* (repent), or possibly to the Latin word *poenitet* (repent). Erasmus uses both words in the immediate context.

cum socordes in re peragenda, sero incipimus esse attenti, jam admoniti nostris malis.

when we are heedless in taking action, we become aware too late, now admonished by our own suffering.

Notes: Brendan Cook gives the following translation: “While the wise avoid mistakes in the first place, the foolish must feel the painful consequences of their choices before correcting themselves. ‘For when we are heedless in taking action,’ Erasmus says, clarifying why he feels the original Greek is best expressed by *resipiscere*, ‘we become aware too late, admonished by our own suffering.’” (Brendan Cook, “The Uses of Resipiscere in the Latin of Erasmus: in the Gospels

and Beyond.” *Canadian Journal of History*, Volume 42, Number 3, Winter 2007.)

The Latin word *socordes* means “foolish, blockish, stupid, thoughtless, senseless, etc.” (see Charlton T. Lewis, *A New Latin Dictionary* [New York: 1907], p. 1716).

And the Latin word *malis* (the plural of *malus*) means “evils” or “wrongs”. So a more literal English translation of Erasmus’ statement would be: “when something is done foolishly, stupidly, thoughtlessly, or senselessly, we become aware too late, now admonished by our own wrongs (bad choices).” Think of the regret (*metamelētheis*) of Judas in Matthew 27:3, for example.

Graecae vocis elegantiam annotavit Tertullianus libro adversus Marcionem secundo: *Nam & in Graeco, inquit, sono poenitentia nomen non ex delicti confessione, sed ex animi demutatione compositum est.*

Of the Greek word [for repentance] Tertullian elegantly commented in *Against Marcion* book II: *Now in Greek, he says, the word for repentance (metanoia) is formed, not from the confession of a sin, but from a change of mind.*

Notes: Cf. Tertullian, *Against Marcion*, ANTE-NICENE CHRISTIAN LIBRARY: TRANSLATIONS OF THE WRITINGS OF THE FATHERS DOWN TO A.D. 325., 24 Volumes, Vol. 7. Edited by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson. Translated by Peter Holmes (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1868), p. 107.

Meo iudicio commode verti poterat *Resipiscite, sive Ad mentem redite.*

In my judgment it [*Metanoeite*] can be properly translated *Recover your senses*, or *Return to a right mind*.

Notes: This statement has been variously translated. James Simpson translates it as follows: “By my judgment it would be more properly translated ‘recover one’s senses,’ or ‘reflect’” (Simpson, *Burning To Read: English Fundamentalism and Its Reformation Opponents* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press], p. 74.) Timothy Wengert translates it: “In my judgment, it could be properly translated ‘Recover your senses!’ or ‘Return to a right mind!’” (Wengert, *Martin Luther’s Ninety-Five Theses* [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2015], p. xxxiii.) Also see the article “The Ninety-Five Theses: The Little Spark That Grew Into A Reforming Fire” by James F. Korthals, who translates the same phrase: “In my judgment, it [that is, *metanoeite*] could be properly translated ‘Recover your senses!’ or ‘Return to a right mind!’” (Korthals, “The Little Spark that Grew into a Reforming Fire,” *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*, Vol. 114, No. 3 [Summer 2017], p. 177, brackets his.) Korthals is apparently quoting Wengert whom he cites in the footnotes (Ibid, see footnote 49).

Siquidem resipiscit, cui vita superior displicet.

For indeed he comes to his senses, whose former life is displeasing to him.

Notes: Or, "...the man who comes to his senses is displeased with his former life." (Rummel, *Erasmus' Annotations*, p. 152.)

Caeterum, poenitentiam agere, pro affici duci-que poenitudine,

But [the Latin Vulgate says] *to do penance*, instead of *to be led to repentance*,

Notes: For the phrase *to be led to repentance*, cf. Rom. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9. The phrase can also be translated: *to be moved to repentance* (cf. Prov. 21:1; 2 Cor. 3:14-16).

ut nolim pronunciare barbarum ac soloecum,

I refuse to pronounce a barbarous solecism,

Notes: Or, I refuse to recite a badly formed expression and incorrect speech. No doubt Erasmus is referring to the phrase "Do penance".

ita non memini legere apud probos Auctores.

and not remember to read the writings of good authors.

Notes: None

Actus poenitentia, pro ductus poenitudine, semel est apud Suetonium.

Act of repentance, instead of *touched by repentance*, [occurs only] once in Suetonius.

Notes: This work of Suetonius may be lost to history because I could find no reference to the phrase “actus poenitentia” in his extant writings. The other Latin phrase that Erasmus uses here is “ductus poenitudine”. How is this phrase to be translated into English? What are some possible English translations?

Interestingly enough, the same Latin phrase is also found in the Latin Vulgate in Deuteronomy 30:1. The Roman Catholic Douay-Rheims Bible, which is basically just an English translation of the Latin Vulgate, translates the phrase “ductus poenitudine” in Deuteronomy 30:1 as “touched by repentance”. The Brenton Septuagint (a Greek translation from the Hebrew) says “call to mind” (see Deut. 30:1, Brenton LXX). Deuteronomy 30:1 in the King James Version also says “call *them* to mind” (the word “*them*” is supplied by the translators). Some other Bible translations of Deuteronomy 30:1 read: “call *them* to mind” (ASV, ESV, NASB, NKJV, Webster's), “take to heart” (NLT), “take them to heart” (NIV, Darby), “come to your senses” (CSB, HCSB), “realize” (CEV), “remember” (GNT), “reflect upon” (NET), “bethink thyself” (JPS Tanakh 1917), “brought them back unto thy heart” (Young’s Literal Translation), and Tyndale, in his translation of the Pentateuch, translates it: “turn unto thine heart”.

Et apud Plinium in Epistolis, *poenitentia poenitentiam egit*, reperitur, sed addito casu paterno.

And Pliny [the Younger] in his Letters [7.10], *repent of its former repentance*, is found, not to mention an additional case from his uncle [Pliny the Elder].

Notes: None

Sic enim dixisse videtur, *poenitentiam agere*, pro *poenitere*: quemadmodum dicimus, *vitam agere*, pro *vivere*.

Thus to say, *to do penance*, instead of *to repent*: [is similar to] how we say, *to conduct your life a certain way*, instead of [simply] *to live*.

Notes: The Latin phrase *vitam agere* is literally translated: "*to act life*" (see B. L.

Ullman, *Elementary Latin* [New York: MacMillan, 1923], p. 69.) The

phrase *vitam agere* can also be translated: "*To LIVE: —accordingly as one*

professes" (William Robertson, *A Dictionary of Latin Phrases* [London, 1824], p.

618). The other word *vivere* can also be translated: *to be alive*. So *vivere* can

either be translated *to live*, or *to be alive*.

Absolute posuit Valerius Maximus cap. *De Sapienter dictis ac factis: Respondit, utrum horum fecisse, poenitentiam acturum, quod ex iis, quae mox praecedunt, facile liquet, cujus rei sit poenitudo.*

Valerius Maximus put it perfectly in the chapter *Wise Words and Deeds: [Socrates] responded, whichever choice you make, you will repent*, and from these statements which immediately precede, it is easily seen, what repentance is.

Notes: See Valerius Maximus, *Memorable Deeds and Sayings*, book 7, chapter 2: *Wise Words and Deeds*.

Veluti quum dicimus, duxi uxorem, sed poenitet.

Just as when we say, I have married the woman, but repent.

Notes: This statement by Erasmus refers back to Socrates' response. In the original context, Socrates is answering the question of a young man who asked him if it is better to marry or to remain single.

Fabius lib. nonus [9] indicat Sallustium scripsisse, non poeniturum, pro non acturum poenitentiam.

Fabius [Quintilian, *Institutes of Oratory*], book 9 [chapter 3.12], indicates that Sallust wrote, *not intending to repent*, for *not intending to do penance*.

Notes: Cf. Alexander Adam, *A Compendious Dictionary of the Latin Tongue* (Edinburgh: 1805), p. 345; E. A. Andrews, *A Copious and Critical Latin-English Lexicon* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1851), p. 1155.

**Caeterum non admodum arrisit periphrasis, *Vitae prioris poenitentiam agite,*
aut, *Delictorum poenitentiam agite.***

Moreover, I am not very favorable to periphrasis [such as], *Repent of your former life*, or *Repent of your failings*.

Notes: Periphrasis is defined as the “use of a longer phrasing in place of a possible shorter form of expression” or similarly, “the using of several words to express the sense of one”.

Et tamen errant homines pii juxta ac erudite, quibus circumitio magis placuit, ne quis calumniaretur, ut nunc sunt mores ac tempora, poenitentiam ab Evangelio profligatam.

And yet erring men both pious and erudite, prefer rather to twist [things], indeed they falsely accuse, as these are now the customs and times [in which we live], [they command] penance by which the Gospel has been ruined.

Notes: An alternate translation is given by Rummel: “Erasmus comments that ‘there were men, both pious and erudite, who preferred the circuitous *poenitentiam agite* – [I am saying this] lest someone slander me, as often happens in this day and age, saying that I eliminate penance from the Gospel.’” (Rummel, *Erasmus’ Annotations*, p. 153, brackets hers.)

Quanquam non protinus ideo profligatur salubris illa satisfactio,

Although it was not this way at the very outset and thus [by this custom of doing penance] the wholesome satisfaction is destroyed,

Notes: None

quae comitatur resipiscentiam,

which accompanies a return to a right understanding,

Notes: The *Lexico* online dictionary gives this helpful information on the Latin word *resipiscentia*: “post-classical Latin *resipiscentia* repentance from classical Latin *resip̄scent-*, *resip̄scēns*, present participle of *resip̄scere* to regain consciousness, to become sane again, to recover one's reason, to come to one's senses again, to see reason”. Compare the following translation of Lactantius: “For he who repents of that which he has done, understands his former error; and on this account the Greeks better and more significantly speak of *metanoia*, which we may speak of in Latin as a return to a right understanding [*resipiscentiam*].” (*The Works of Lactantius*, translated by William Fletcher [Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1871], 2 Vols., Vol. 1, p. 416.)

ac lachrymis piis que officiis delet,

and puts an end to pious tears [and] ceremonial duties,

Notes: None

& quodammodo pensat delictum,

& which [it is thought] somehow pay for the offense,

Notes: Or, somehow compensates for the wrong. In other words, it is thought by some people that pious tears and obligatory duties pay for the offense, in some measure.

si Graeca vox, non a poena,

but if the Greek word, [is] not derived from *punishment*,

Notes: None

ut quibusdam videtur, ducta poenitentia,

as it seems to some, [who translate it] *penance*,

Notes: None

quum probabilius sit ductam a pone tenendo,

whereas more likely it would be derived from *comprehending afterwards*,

Notes: Or, *re-comprehending, reconsidering, rethinking*. See E. A. Andrews, *A Copious and Critical Latin-English Lexicon* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1851): the entry for the Latin word *teneo*, I. A. 1., “*comprehend a thing which is palpable or evident*” and also entry I. B. 1., “*To hold, contain in the mind, to conceive, comprehend, know*” (pp. 1528, 1529). The Latin word *pone* means *after, backward, back, behind*. The Latin phrase *pone tenendo* can be literally translated “*comprehending afterwards*” or in other words, “*to understand a thing after it is done*”. (Cf. *The Commentary of Dr. Zacharias Ursinus on the Heidelberg Catechism*, translated from the original Latin, by the Rev. G. W. Williard [Cincinnati: Elm Street Printing Company, 1888], p. 469.)

sed a *resipiscendo*,

and indeed by *coming to one's senses*,

Notes: Or, *recovering one's senses, returning to a right mind, returning to a right understanding.* The Latin verb is *resipisco* which is translated: “*to recover one's senses, come to one's self again; to revive, recover*” and also: “*are returned to your senses, become reasonable*” (Charlton T. Lewis, *A New Latin Dictionary* [New York: 1907], p. 1579). Professor John Hey, in his *Lectures in Divinity* delivered at the University of Cambridge in the late 18th century, gives the following definition: “*resipiscere: from re and sapescio, as it were; to recover one's sense; one's right mind.*” In a footnote he goes on to explain that “*Resipisco* is used, in Suetonius, for recovering from a fainting-fit: *resipiscentia* was coined, from *metanoia*, in the time of Lactantius, (Ainsworth); there is no idea of *conduct* in either *resipisco* or *metanoeo*, except as far as reformation may be supposed to follow, of *course*, from recovering one's right *mind*, or reforming one's *principles [beliefs]*;—*metamelomai*, to be *uneasy*, is only a *step* toward such change of mind; as has been observed at St. Mary's by Mr. Dixon of Bene't College.” (John Hey, *Lectures in Divinity Delivered at the University of Cambridge* [Cambridge: 1822], Vol. 3, p. 459, emphasis his.) Cf. Bede, *Commentary on Genesis*. See Bede's comments on Genesis 3:8b where *resipiscendo* is translated “repentance”: “They hide themselves from the face of God, not in such a way that the inward Judge does not see their conscience, but that they may never see the glory of His face except by repentance.”

mutataque sententia deducitur.

it is described as *a change of mind*.

Notes: Or, *change of opinion, feeling, thought, vote, sentence*. Martin Luther also affirmed that the Greek word *metanoia* means “a change of mind”. In a letter to Staupitz, dated Trinity Sunday, 1518, Luther wrote: “Afterwards, by the favor of the learned, who are so zealously transmitting to us the Greek and Hebrew, I learned that the same word in Greek is *metanoia*, so that repentance or *metanoia* is ‘a change of mind.’ This corresponded so aptly with the Pauline Theology, that, in my judgment, scarcely anything can more aptly illustrate Paul.” (Martin Luther, quoted by Henry E. Jacobs, *Elements of Religion* [Philadelphia: The Board of Publication of the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran church in North America, 1913], p. 281.)

Nos igitur utrunque vertimus, ut omnibus quantum licet gratificemur.

Therefore we translate both of the two [words], so that I may oblige everyone as much as possible.

Notes: I.e. both words. This seems to be either a reference to *metanoeo* and *poenitentia*, or to *metanoeo* and *resipiscendo*.

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